NEFIRS NEWS

HAVE YOU REPORTED YET?

Thank you to everyone who has submitted their 2005 reports. I appreciate your timeliness. Several departments have sent in reports for the first time in several years – welcome back!

If you haven't sent in your 2005 reports yet there's still time. Please try to have them in by May 31, 2006. To save time, please double-check them to make sure all errors are corrected be submitting them.

It is very important that you correct any errors in your reports. Invalid reports are not of any use. I'm not being critical when I send a report back for correction or send an email asking that you correct invalid reports on the server. I know it's easy to overlook something or intend to go back and correct the errors only to get busy with something else and forget.

Starting this year, any invalid reports that are not corrected will be deleted from the server and the department will not be given credit for that report. If that is the only report submitted for the year, then the department will not be counted as reporting. This could affect your FEMA grants.

Some departments have asked if they can submit 2003 and 2004 reports to comply with grant requirements. Yes, you can but you need to send them in as soon as possible and definitely by May 31, 2006.

Oh, and any new chief that stumbles across old reports (NFIRS 4.1 or earlier), please throw them away. We are only accepting reports submitted using either NFIRS 5.0 software or NFIRS 5.0 paper forms.

REPORTING REMINDERS

NOTE: References to fields and sections are by the names the USFA gave the objects. Some software vendors changed the names and/or locations. Hopefully you will still understand what I am referring to. If not, let me know.

- Incident numbers **must be all numeric** – no letters, dashes, etc. Those using the Federal Data Entry Tool will find that it allows you to enter these, but doing so will cause problems down the road, e.g., you won't be able to retrieve your incidents.
- The Alarm, Arrival and Last Unit Cleared Date and Time are required fields although there isn't a star by Last Unit Cleared. Be sure to enter times using the 24 hour clock. Please pay close attention to the dates and times that are entered. I'm still seeing response times of several hours.
- It is also important that the dates and times that are entered on the Apparatus and EMS Module fall into the same date and time range that was entered on the Basic Module. Many errors occur because, for example, the Last Unit Cleared time on the Apparatus Module will be after the Last Unit Cleared time that was entered on the Basic Module.
- If you transport patients from one facility to another in a non-emergency mode, e.g., a nursing home patient in one town to a hospital in another town, please enter the alarm time as the time you picked up the patient to transport or the time you arrived at the station to go pick up the patient. Do not use the time you received the call to arrange the transport. This skews the response times. The arrival time may be the same as the alarm time or if you used the time you arrive at the station to go pick up the patient, then you could enter the time you arrived at the patient's location as the arrival time.
- Do **NOT** use codes that have (Conversion Only) after them. These codes are exclusively for converting NFIRS 4.1 data to the NFIRS 5.0 format. They are not valid codes to be used in completing a 5.0 incident report. Example: Incident Type 110 is a conversion only code. Use Incident Type 111 Structure Fire instead.

- Don't forget to complete a Fire Module for Incident Types 111-173. This module is required for all fires unless contained (Incident Types 113-118) or Mutual Aid Given (3 or 4).
- Be sure you report all fire fatalities and civilian fire injuries. Don't wait for a copy of our investigation report before sending in reports. The NFIRS reports are supposed to be what your department did at the scene and won't necessarily mirror the SFM investigative report.
- Also, be sure you enter the number of casualties in the correct fields on the Basic Module. If there was 1 civilian injury, make sure it is entered in the Civilian Injury field and not the Civilian Fatality fields. In verifying fire fatalities for 2005 I found a couple of fatalities that were actually minor injuries.
- Please try to avoid using "unknown" codes, e.g., Incident Type 100 and Action Taken 00, as much as possible. Try to find a code that comes as close as possible to describing the incident. Only use the "unknown" codes if you can not find a more descriptive code. This means you may have to fill out more modules, but the additional information is important. Don't use the "unknown" codes, especially Incident Type 100, just to be counted as reporting to meet grant or other requirements.
- If you code an incident to the Incident Type130 series of codes, the Mobile Property section on the Fire Module (H) must be completed.
- Don't forget to refer to Appendix B if you are having trouble finding a code. Appendix B has most of the code categories in alphabetical order and it might be easier to find what you are looking for this way instead of in numeric order.
- If you have exposure fires be sure to fill out a report for each exposure (use the same incident number but change the exposure number from 000 to 001, 002, etc). Don't just change the exposure number field to indicate the number of exposures.
- We've been telling you that for Incident Types 140-143, 160, and 170-173 you could complete the Wildland Module instead of the Fire Module. This isn't entirely true. If there were zero (0) acres burned you **cannot** complete the Wildland Module. Please complete the Fire Module instead. Also, if it is a stack of hay bales that burned and very little grass surrounding the bales burned, please complete the Fire Module.

FIRE DEPARTMENT RESOURCE INVENTORY REPORT

If you haven't returned the Fire Department Resource Inventory Report mailed out in January and there are changes to the information, please return them as soon as possible.

If you have misplaced it, you can complete the Fire Department Information Change form found on our website (www.sfm.ne.gov – Forms – Fire Departments)

PAYMENT FORMS

Enclosed with this newsletter are the payment letters to those departments whose chief is not reimbursed more than $50 per year for his/her services. This is in accordance with State Statute 81-531. Reimbursement may only be made for fires (Incident Type 100-173) and where Mutual Aid is not equal to 3 or 4.

If you receive a payment form, please be sure to sign **AND** enter your social security number. Payment cannot be made if one or the other of these is missing. Please return the form by May 31, 2006 or as close to that date as possible.

CONTACT INFORMATION FOR HELP

Lori: Phone (402) 471-9472
Email lori.loyd@sfm.ne.gov
Also send data files to my email address

Cathy: Phone (402) 471-9479
Email cathy.wann@sfm.ne.gov

FEMA Help Desk:
Phone: (888) 382-3827
Email at fema-nfirshhelp@dhs.gov
The Help Desk is available from 8:30 to 4:30 Eastern time, Monday through Friday.